

A brief statement of the facts, shewing the importance of a bridge over the river Subquehanna, at Connowingo Creek.

A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FACTS, SHEWING THE IMPORTANCE OF A BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER SUSQUEHANNA, AT Connowingo Creek, AND OF THE ROADS TO THE RIVER SUSQUEHANNA, TO THE GROWTH OF THE CITY OF BALTIMORE, AND TO THE COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE OF ITS INHABITANTS; WITH A MAP, SHEWING THE DIFFERENT ROUTES TO LANCASTER AND PHILADELPHIA.

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A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FACTS, &c

AMONG the various objects which have claimed the attention of the public for the interest, or embellishment of Baltimore, there is none in usefulness, which merits our attention more, than the contemplated bridge across the river Susquehanna at the Creek of Connowingo;—which will connect the fertile Country on the Eastern side of that River with the City of Baltimore, from whence we shall receive large and regular supplies to our markets;—and by which we shall in a great degree, approach the excellence and plenty of the markets of Philadelphia.

But it is not merely by the supplies from an improved and rich country that we are to limit the benefits to be derived from this Bridge—we must anticipate an easy, safe, and expeditions route to Philadelphia, that may be travelled with comfort in twelve hours—an interchange of correspondence and intelligence with the Eastern Section of our Continent, without the dangers, delays and disappointments arising from an obstructed River—a

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reduction of the charge of postage, from the diminished distance, which graduated on an honest ratio of distances, would save an incredible sum in the annual postages paid by the Citizens of Baltimore—and another consideration, not the least, is, we may reckon with a moral certainty on a remuneration to the Stockholders, beyond any other Institution of the kind known of, within the United States.

On these leading features, arising out of the objects, we shall make some further remarks before we finish our observations.

In aid of the benefits which this Bridge is estimated to yield, there is put into execution, under a law of the State of Maryland, a road from Baltimore to the River Susquehanna, which it will strike at three different points, diverging from one common road, at the distance of ten miles from the City.

The act, we have said, is in operation, and the President of the Company for making the road, has favored us with his communications and observations on the subject. As a person of experience and knowledge in undertakings for public use, and as a practical civil engineer, none stands higher in general estimation. He states, “That in conformity to a law, passed by the Legislature of Maryland, at their last session, to mark and lay out a turnpike road from the City of Baltimore, to three points on the River Susquehanna. viz. M'Call's ferry, the rough Islands on Connowingo Creek, and at Rock Run; the commissioners have executed the work, deputed to them by the act. The country North and East of Baltimore, stands greatly in need of roads, and will be much benefitted by those contemplated, when executed. As an object for an investment of money, these roads offer a fair prospect of remuneration to the Stockholders. After passing the best portion of Baltimore and Harford Counties, where the lands are fine, and agricultural improvements are carried to a great extent, they lead into the rich Counties of Chester and Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, from whence supplies are sent to the market of Philadelphia, and keep up a constant passing of waggons & carts—the best source of revenue to a turnpike road.

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That branch of the road which leads to the scite where the bridge is to be built over the River Susquehanna, at Connowingo Creek, is a more direct route to Philadelphia, than any other road now made, or, in my opinion, than any which can be made, with the like advantages of ground, and the facility of crossing the Susquehanna. It passes from Baltimore to Bell-Air, on a very level country: The falls of Gunpowder are crossed with convenience;—it then passes through the Eastern section of the valley of Long Green—then crosses the little falls of Gunpowder, a little below the stave ford, and thence to Belle-Air, through the fine farming countries about, and in the vicinity of Deer Creek, which it crosses, and continues over excellent ground to the River Susquehanna, to the point where the Bridge is intended to be built, opposite to the mouth of Connowingo Creek.

The position of this place for a Bridge is worthy of particular attention;—the surface of the River is contracted to the space of one fifth part of a mile in width. A bed of stupendous rocks extends across the River at suitable distances, whereon piers can be built with little difficulty, to support the superstructure of a Bridge; and the shores are likewise of solid rock, of a sufficient heighth to afford security to the Bride, without being so high, as to cause much labour, or expence in making an easy access to it from each side of the River. The spaces between the rocks on which the Bridge will rest, are sufficiently wide to allow any quantity of ice to pass, with safety to the Bridge; and from the depth of the River, ice cannot accumulate and back up, as it does in many parts where the water is shallow, and obstructions impede the passage of ice, and other bodies floating down; more especially at tide water, where the current of the River ceasing 5 it deposits and sometimes accumulates in immense bodies.* The River Susquehanna, opposite the Connowingo Creek, flows with great force, in a smooth, deep and rapid current. The rocks are sufficiently elevated above its level, to give security to the works to be erected on them, and the shores afford ample materials for their construction.

The distance of the Bridge from tide water, gives a security against an invading enemy by sea, which it would not have were it built lower down. We may judge of the fate that

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would have attended a handsome Bridge across such a River as the Susquehanna, the link uniting the North and South of our country, had one been erected near the tide water, at the time that the British landed at Havre-de-Grace, and burnt Mr. Stump's Warehouse.

Another circumstance in favor of a Bridge at Connowingo. (and of the greatest importance to subscribers) is, the smallness of the sum required for its completion. From a correct estimate of the whole of the expence, it will not exceed *Eighty Thousand Dollars*: for this sum a person of experience and ability is ready to undertake it, and will deliver it completed to the Stockholders within a limited period. The liberal tolls granted by the Legislature are such as must yield to the Stockholder a dividend of fifteen per cent before the expiration of five years, and will doubtless increase, as the country advances in population and improvement. This fact is so well known by the persons living in Cæcil and Chester Counties, that they subscribed a sum towards the building of the Bridge (as I am informed) not much short of thirty thousand dollars, and they express a confident expectation that forty thousand dollars and upwards will be subscribed East of the Susquehanna, before the Bridge be contracted for.

Continuing the road from Connowingo to Pennsylvania, the ground is very good for a road, the materials for making it abundant, and the country highly improved. It passes Ochterara Creek, with convenience, and goes from thence to a Village at New London Cross Road, in Pennsylvania, where the people look towards Baltimore, as their market town. There are portions of Lancaster and Chester Counties, for a space of more than twenty miles square, that will prefer Baltimore to Philadelphia as a market, from the mere circumstance of convenience. But when we take into view the difference of prices which govern these

* During the last winter, the ice which floated down the river grounded near the head of the tide, and from thence backed up a great distance along the bank of the Canal, and accumulated on the wall of the Canal (which is a considerable height above the level of the water) ten feet in thickness, forming an immense mass of ice twenty or thirty feet thick, and

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upwards of a mile in width. What mason work could have resisted such a pressure of ice added to by the head of water which the river presented at that time?

6 two markets, the inducements are very great to give Baltimore a preference, and must extend over a much larger space than twenty miles square, until an equality of price prevails in the two markets of Philadelphia and Baltimore.

From New London Cross Roads there is a road laid out to Chads-ford, over the Brandywine River, and from thence to the Bridge over the Schuylkill, at the Village of Hamilton. An act passed the Legislature of Pennsylvania sometime since, to make a turnpike on this location, to New London Cross Roads; and a company was formed, who completed fifteen miles of it. From the want of a co-operation in Maryland, the progress of this road was slow, and in a great degree suspended, until a movement was made about a road to the Susquehanna, and a law was obtained for that road and for the Bridges over the River. These undertakings have revived the making of the New London Cross Road Turnpike, and it will probably be completed before the Bridge at Connowingo will be passable.

When these objects are accomplished, Maryland will have the satisfaction of knowing that she possesses a great public road, on the sea board, extending throughout her State, supported by private companies, and affording the shortest route from Washington to Philadelphia.

It will now be proper to notice the other branches of the Road from Baltimore to the River Susquehanna, to which much importance attaches, connected as they are with the interests of Baltimore, as a market for their sales and purchases. The branch which leads to M'Call's ferry, departs from a common to the three branches for ten miles from Baltimore, at the north-west side of the falls of great Gunpowder. It then passes the rich settlement of Long Green valley, and will accommodate the manor farms. It is from this quarter that Baltimore is mostly supplied with hay. Passing through the valley of Long Green, it crosses the falls of Little Gunpowder, a small distance below Amos's mill, and

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from thence it goes to the Pennsylvania line, in a direction towards M'Call's ferry, to a point where the road from the Bridge meets it. The Bridge over M'Call's ferry is nearly completed, and is now passable. To join with this Bridge, a road is laid off from Lancaster, which will pass thro' the Town of Strasburgh, a central position of that country, and will draw much produce to Baltimore by M'Call's Bridge. A Company are about to make this road, as they have been organized for that purpose sometime. When completed, this road will afford the shortest practicable route to Lancaster, and will place Baltimore, unrivalled by Philadelphia, in the possession of the business of that portion of Lancaster County, lying convenient to the Bridge at M'Call's, and of that section or country lying westward, which heretofore passed by Lancaster to Philadelphia. The distance 7 from Baltimore to M'Call's ferry is nearly 41 miles; from thence to Lancaster, it is stated to be 14 miles, making the whole distance from Baltimore to Lancaster, 55 miles, and consequently less, than from Philadelphia to Lancaster.

The third branch of the Susquehanna road continues on the same bed with the Connowingo Bridge Road, from Baltimore to Belle-Air. It there diverges to a place in the Susquehanna River, called Rock Run, near to the head of tide water, where it is intended to build a Bridge by a Company, formed under an act of the Legislature for that purpose. A very good route has been ascertained for the road from Belle-Air to Rock Run, and although not in as straight a direction as might be wished for, and the distance is thereby a little increase, yet the level country through which it passes, will give it a preference to any other road that can be located from the same point to Baltimore.

I presume that the foregoing statement of facts may be deemed sufficiently explanatory and will afford all the intelligence necessary to be known, to enable the public to see the importance of the Bridge and the road in question. Hitherto, their attention has been directed to roads leading to the westward, to countries that could find no better market than Baltimore. I think it will appear that those nearer the sea board will be found equally important and more lucrative—And when we consider that the distance from Baltimore to Philadelphia is reduced to ninety-one miles in the place of one hundred and five miles, with

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the passage of the river Susquehanna made safe and easy, every one must feel a pride and an interest in its accomplishment.”

(Signed,) JOHN DAVIS.

This lucid and intelligent report, leaves us in full possession of all the fact, and the leading interests appertaining to, and arising out of objects on which it treats. Persons wishing to invest money, will be able to estimate how far the Connowingo Bridge, or the roads to it, and to the other points on the Susquehanna, are adviseable schemes for speculation; and in making this estimate, they will doubtless keep in mind, that the present undertakings are connected with a country already populous and productive; with a river which is almost inexhaustable in abundance and variety of objects, and which annually increases its productions; and consequently that the revenue from a bridge and roads thus circumstanced, may be calculated on to be immediate. It will be seen by the annexed map of the roads, that they reach the Susquehanna in short distances from Baltimore, connecting with other roads, made by other adventurers; giving to the roads we contemplate all the advantages of their improvements. These roads converge towards the Susquehanna, and will find there an *embouchure* by the bridges over that river, that will lead to Baltimore, & give to our city all the benefit, without the expence of a long and extensive improvement, the more distant parts of which would require the profits of the gates near the city to support them.

But although many persons may engage in these objects as a mere speculation, there are others who will take a more enlarged view, and will see consequences resulting from them, which tend to enlarge a city, and give national convenience and importance. The geographical position of Baltimore, for foreign commerce and for internal trade, is one of the most favored in the United States. At the head of a spacious bay, which receives some of the largest rivers of the union into its waters; one of which traverses the interior of Pennsylvania and New York; giving us from that circumstance an union of interest with them, and which politically, will probably, in the course of events, give to Baltimore,

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as the capital of Maryland, a consideration and weight it would not have otherwise. With this object in view, every measure that can connect that river with our city, ought to be embraced; we ought to identify it as our own, and appreciate its importance in the combined estimate of policy and interest.

Baltimore may be considered as the Atlantic port for the western states; and her extensive relations with that section of the union manifest the truth of this fact, and the decided advantage she enjoys.

With these several advantages; with materials for building of every description; with a copious supply of wholesome water and a healthy atmosphere, population will follow, if the expence of living be not so great as to eat away the benefits which her fortunate position gives to her.

It cannot be denied that living is dearer in Baltimore than it is in Philadelphia, by at least twenty-five per cent. that labor is higher in consequence of the higher price of provisions; and that fewer houses are built than would be, were our supplies of provisions more abundant. That the gain of population to Baltimore would be greater, by drawing from towns which have fewer objects of trade, and less field for enterprize, were our establishments less expensive, is very probable; for a young man, however well supported by connexions, ought to decide with much caution on fixing his residence in a place where he sees, on his first outset, that he is to incur an expence in his living, and his establishment, more than double what trading places are subject to, east of New York.

From the position of Baltimore, an overflowing supply of every necessary of life might be expected: provisions ought to be cheaper there than in any great city of the union; for it lies contiguous to countries the most fertile and abundant, and has a more extensive inland and water communication than any other city.

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With all these advantages, it may be asked, why does not Baltimore possess the same abundance, and at as cheap a rate as other cities to the northward, less favored? The reason is obvious;—the people of Baltimore have never opened those sources of supply that nature has given them. They have debarred their approach, by withholding those facilities necessary to enable them to reach them.

A fertile part of Maryland, Cecil county, is compelled to go to Philadelphia for a market; a part of Chester county, and a part of Lancaster county, are in the same situation; not because they are nearer to Philadelphia, but because they cannot get to Baltimore without more difficulties than they can go to Philadelphia; because they want a bridge at Conowingo, to unite them to Baltimore, and they want the roads now undertaken, to enable them to get there with comfort and convenience.

When this bridge and these roads are accomplished, the abundance of Lancaster and Chester counties will be found in the markets of Baltimore, and living will be maintained as cheap as in any other place.

Cities are, in respect to provisions, like animals; they grow by an abundance of food. And where nature has formed a spot conveniently situated for a mart, to supply the wants of men, and to afford occupation to a number of people, there a city will grow, if zeal, enterprize and order be observed.

It is a trite remark, that where Providence has done much for a people, they will do little for themselves. However true this axiom may be in general, it is certainly not applicable to Baltimore. Providence has done much for them, and they have improved what Providence has given. No people have manifested more public spirit; have been bolder in their enterprizes, and have received more reward. Every exertion in support of institutions, where money has been required, has been made; and these institutions have become so numerous, and successful, that they furnish revenue for others, where utility and benefit recommend them.

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Baltimore already enjoys a commercial consideration, which must gratify, whilst it enriches her merchants. But it is not enough that she ranks as a third or a fourth in public estimation. We believe it is *decreed* that she must take the lead of every city in the union but one, in population, in commerce, and in capital.*

* The relative position of New York, compared with Baltimore, may be imagined, by supposing a town like Baltimore fixed at the mouth of the Potomac. In this situation, that town would have an easy and immediate access to the sea. The Potomac would represent North River, and the bay would represent East River, the Sound, and the waters and the countries contiguous to it. New York has numerous towns dividing the western trade with her, from whence they proceed to sea, without using her port. Baltimore on the Potomac, would feel the competition of Baltimore on the Patapsco; and if Baltimore on the Potomac were destroyed by an enemy, it would never rise again. The commerce of Newyork, is less supported by the produce of her interiour, than it is by her coasting trade; and were her coasting trade to find a good market, and an easy access to the ports of the south, by internal navigation, Newyork would feel sensibly the less.

10 How long it may take to realize this prediction, it would be presumpti on to state: but we nevertheless believe it will grow from the germ, which has already manifested its luxuriance.

It is not by foreign commerce alone, that the City of Baltimore is to be made a large and populous community. For altho' every avenue be opened, and the resources of the country be greater and more numerous in variety than her neighbours possess, there is a point beyond which commerce cannot profitably be extended, and perhaps we must look to a great falling off in this branch of industry. But the internal commerce of the United States is a source of occupation, profit and improvement, which few have estimated, and fewer appreciate as they ought. It may reasonably be admitted that foreign commerce does not employ one person, where internal commerce employs five; and the ratio will increase, as we advance in age and experience.

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Baltimore is happily situated for this domestic commerce: the immense bay which breaks so far into the land, has fixed the City mid-way between the western waters and the Ocean: it is a point of communication that cannot be dispensed with—it is easily approached from all the rivers that empty into the great Cheasapeak—it gradually absorbs the commerce of the towns on these several rivers—and as its capital and population augment, will extend its influence to places which now seek other markets, and will by common consent, become a place of general resort from all quarters to where inland navigation can be carried.

It would not be doing ourselves justice to suppose that every avenue will not be opened as we increase in men and money. Like other nations we shall extend our views, and object after object will be embraced, until we display the most magnificent inland communication of any nation on the globe. It must be admitted that Great Britain has set us an example in this sort of improvement which excites our admiration, and may furnish us with lessons for our instruction. But Great Britain nor any other country, furnishes a chain of connexion and proximity, which our interior waters afford—uniting by small intervals of land only, the Cheasapeak, the Delaware, North River, the St. Lawrence, the Lakes and Mississippi. And again coastwise, we may with very little labour, and especially by steam boats, pass from Georgia to the Cheasapeak, without danger from the Ocean, thus circumscribing or connecting the whole territory of the United States, which are inhabited.

In this great round, Baltimore is somewhat central, at least it must be considered equally so with New-York; for the river Susquehanna can be made to communicate with the lakes, and with the head waters of the Mississippi, with less expence than a communication can be opened to New-York;—and if the Chesapeake be one of the channels thro' which this round is to be carried, Baltimore may reasonably reckon on a large portion of the merchandise which may be transported finding its way to her ports. That these results will arise, we may hope with more than sanguine partiality, if we judge by what has been done. If we look back for a few years we shall see Baltimore without

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a road—without a bridge—or any thing to mark the State of Maryland in the traveller's eye, but wretchedness and difficulty;—for our roads were formed, where the first settlers placed them, or where the animals of the forest had marked a track to the waters of the bay. Our sea board roads were placed on dry gravelly ridges, where a passage could be had with the least inconvenience; and hence every traveller viewed the part of Maryland which bordered on the highway as sterile, and its inhabitants as tenants of misery. If we anticipate a few years, and see the improvements realized, which we now recommend, we may promise ourselves a more flattering picture;—for the road to Philadelphia will be thro' a rich country, highly improved;—the farms bespeak comfort and opulence;—and the passage across the Susquehanna bridge at Connowingo, will strike the traveller with respect for the people who could erect it, and impress him with a conviction that he is approaching a city where opulence, enterprize and liberality characterize its inhabitants.

ADDENDUM.

The rate of tolls for the bridge at Connowingo are subjoined. An estimate may be made of the probable profits that will arise to the stockholders when the daily tolls are calculated, and divided on a capital of *one hundred thousand dollars*.

The bridge will cost *eighty thousand dollars*, and a mile of road at each side of the river, to give a good access to the bridge, may cost *ten thousand dollars* a mile, making one hundred thousand for the whole capital. Of this sum *forty thousand dollars* are or will be subscribed on the books opened in Cæcil and Pennsylvania, and commissioners will open books for subscriptions in Harford County. It is not probable that Baltimore can participate in this stock, more than 30 to 40,000 dollars.

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RATE OF TOLLS.

All pleasure carriages, stages, &c. drawn by 4 horses, \$1 50

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Ditto do. do. 2 1 00

All waggons do. 4 1 00

Ditto do. 2 0 75

Gigs, carts & 2 wheeled carriages do. 2 0 62½

Ditto do. do. 1 0 50

A horse with a rider 0 25

A horse without a rider 0 12½

Foot passengers and horned cattle a head 0 6¼

Sheep, hogs, &c. a head 0 3

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